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UNCLAS VATICAN 005404

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR EUR/WE (MENNUTI)

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PINR VT UN

SUBJECT: HOLY SEE NOMINATES NEW VATICAN PERMANENT OBSERVER
TO THE U.N.: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON CELESTINO MIGLIORE

REFS: A) VATICAN 4398, B) VATICAN 4388

11. (U) POPE JOHN PAUL II HAS APPOINTED UNDERSECRETARY FOR
RELATIONS WITH STATES (DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER) MONSIGNOR
UNCLASSIFIED

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CELESTINO MIGLIORE TO BE THE HOLY SEE'S PERMANENT OBSERVER
AT THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK. MIGLIORE REPLACES
ARCHBISHOP RENATO MARTINO WHO RETURNS TO ROME TO TAKE UP A
SENIOR CURIA POSITION. MIGLIORE WILL BE ORDAINED AS AN
ARCHBISHOP BEFORE TAKING UP HIS POSTING TO NEW YORK.

12. (U) CELESTINO MIGLIORE WAS BORN IN CUNEO, IN PIEDMONT
PROVINCE, IN THE NORTH OF ITALY IN 1950. AFTER HIS
ORDINATION AS A CATHOLIC PRIEST HE TOOK UP GRADUATE STUDIES
IN CANON LAW AND DIPLOMACY AND ENTERED THE HOLY SEE'S
DIPLOMATIC SERVICE IN 1980. MIGLIORE SERVED AT HOLY SEE
NUNCIATURES IN ANGOLA, THE U.S., EGYPT, AND POLAND. IN 1992
HE WAS APPOINTED AS THE HOLY SEE'S PERMANENT OBSERVER TO THE
COUNCIL OF EUROPE IN STRASBOURG. HE RETURNED TO ROME IN
1995 UPON HIS APPOINTMENT AS UNDERSECRETARY OF THE SECTION
FOR RELATIONS WITH STATES (AT THE VATICAN'S SECRETARIAT OF
STATE. HE SPEAKS ITALIAN, ENGLISH, FRENCH, SPANISH AND
PORTUGUESE.

13. (SBU) MIGLIORE HAS BEEN ONE OF POST'S MOST OPEN,
ARTICULATE, AND FRIENDLY INTERLOCUTORS. MORE SO THAN MANY
OTHER VATICAN OFFICIALS, HE HAS BEEN WILLING TO ACT TO
RESOLVE PROBLEMS OR ADVANCE POLICY, SOMETIMES DEFYING THE
HOLY SEE'S TRADITIONAL CAUTION. HE WAS, FOR EXAMPLE,
INSTANTLY AND POSITIVELY DISPOSED TO WORKING WITH POST AND
OTHER DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS TO ORGANIZE AND HOST AN
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS WHEN
OTHERS IN THE HOLY SEE WERE MORE HESITANT. THIS "CAN DO"
ATTITUDE SHOULD STAND HIM WELL IN HIS UPCOMING
RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE U.N. THIS IS NOT TO SAY, HOWEVER,
THAT MIGLIORE THINKS LIKE AN AMERICAN. HE IS ITALIAN, AND
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SEES THE WORLD THROUGH A EUROPEAN FILTER, WHICH HAS LED HIM
AT TIMES TO BE CRITICAL OF OR SKEPTICAL TOWARD ASPECTS OF
U.S. POLICIES. FOR EXAMPLE, IN AN EARLY OCTOBER 2001
DISCUSSION WITH POLOFF ABOUT THE U.S. RESPONSE TO THE
ATTACKS OF SEPTEMBER 11, MIGLIORE POINTEDLY NOTED THAT
"AFTER ALL, BIN LADEN IS A U.S. CREATION" (NOTE: REFERRING
TO U.S. ASSISTANCE TO ISLAMIC MUJAHADIN IN AFGHANISTAN IN
THE 1980'S.) LIKEWISE, IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT BIOTECH FOODS,
HE HAS ASSERTED THE VIEW THAT U.S. POLICY IN ZAMBIA IS
DRIVEN BY ECONOMIC, RATHER THAN HUMANITARIAN, INTERESTS.

14. (SBU) MIGLIORE'S VIEWS ON IRAQ AND THE MIDDLE EAST ARE
REPORTED IN DETAIL IN REFTELS. MIGLIORE HAS MADE CLEAR THAT
HE IS "NO FAN OF IRAQ," BUT DOES NOT YET BELIEVE THE U.S.
HAS YET MADE THE CASE FOR PREEMPTIVE MILITARY ACTION.

15. (SBU) MIGLIORE, AS DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER EQUIVALENT AT
THE VATICAN, NECESSARILY COVERED A GLOBAL RANGE OF FOREIGN
POLICY ISSUES. WHETHER BY CHOICE OR CIRCUMSTANCE, IN THE
LAST YEAR HE HAS TAKEN A PARTICULAR INTEREST IN A FEW AREAS:
THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN NORTH KOREA (HE HAS TRAVELED
THERE FIVE TIMES IN RECENT YEARS), THE CHURCH'S POSITION IN
RUSSIA WHERE HE RECENTLY TRAVELED TO DISCUSS GOR'S REFUSAL
OF VISAS TO CATHOLIC CLERGY, AND THE CHURCH'S DIFFICULT
RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM. ALL IN ALL, MIGLIORE CAN BE COUNTED
ON TO BE AN OPEN, SOMETIMES UNVARNISHED, BUT ALSO CAREFUL
AND DELIBERATE INTERLOCUTOR AT THE U.N. HE CERTAINLY ENJOYS
THE CONFIDENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER TAURAN AND THE POPE
HIMSELF.

16. (U) ARCHBISHOP-DESIGNATE MIGLIORE WILL STEP INTO THE
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SHOES OF THE ABLE RENATO MARTINO, THE VATICAN'S
REPRESENTATIVE AT THE U.N. FOR THE LAST 16 YEARS. IT WAS
MARTINO'S LEADERSHIP THAT STEERED THE HOLY SEE DELEGATIONS
TO SELF-PROCLAIMED SUCCESS AT U.N. CONFERENCES IN RIO DE
JANEIRO IN 1992, CAIRO IN 1994, BEIJING IN 1995 AND THE MORE
RECENT 2002 CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA. MARTINO'S 40 YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF VATICAN DIPLOMACY, IN PLACES AS FAR APART AS SINGAPORE AND LEBANON, PROVIDED HIM WITH A UNIQUE PREPARATION FOR HIS TIME AT THE U.N. MARTINO WAS CONSTANTLY IN THE NEWS, BOTH SECULAR AND ECCLESIASTICAL. HE ALSO SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME PROMOTING THE HOLY SEE'S DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES AT THE U.N. DURING VISITS ABROAD. IN FACT, ARCHBISHOP MARTINO'S EFFORTS HAVE TURNED THE PERMANENT OBSERVER POST INTO A KEY VENUE FOR THE HOLY SEE TO PROJECT ITS MESSAGE. MIGLIORE INHERITS THE PRESTIGE, BUT ALSO THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE POST. THE FACT THAT POPE JOHN PAUL CHOSE MIGLIORE TO BE THE HOLY SEE'S PERMANENT OBSERVER AT THE U.N. SHOWS THE HOLY SEE WANTS ITS BEST DIPLOMATIC HAND PLAYED AT THIS KEY INTERNATIONAL TABLE.

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